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DCI/IC 75-220

13 June 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Warning Notices to Merchant Ships

1. The initial meeting of representatives to examine and initiate improvement action re warning to U. S. merchant ships was held at NOSIC, Suitland, at 1300/13 June. In attendance were officers from Navy Intelligence, NOSIC, OPNAV, DIA, State INR, Hydrographic Office of DMA, NSA, CIA, Maritime Administration and Military Sealift Command. The undersigned represented the IC Staff. Captain John Butts of Naval Intelligence chaired the meeting.

2. I provided the background of the DCI report to the President on the Mayaguez incident as it pertained to this subject, and described the improvement actions that appear to be called for as a result. The various representatives provided reports on actions taken and others in development within their areas of responsibility. There followed a general discussion of related problem areas and deficiencies in notification, dissemination, communications, etc. Each of these will become the subject of further attention.

3. The most significant fact to come out of the meeting is that all "special warning" to merchant ships are clearly the responsibility of State Department. This includes the continuing review of classified and unclassified information, recognition of its significance, a judgment that a warning should be originated, preparation of the message, coordination of the message, and, finally, provision of the message to the Hydrographic Information Office for transmission. The frequency of occurrences in this system is about once a year or less.

4. Follow-up actions to be taken and reported on at the next meeting (not yet scheduled) are:

a. DIA, State and NSA with assistance from Navy Intelligence and NOSIC will devise an alert mechanism to assist State

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in recognizing developing situations which may require special warnings.

b. Navy will undertake to identify persons who could be involved and should have special intelligence clearances and will provide for such clearances.

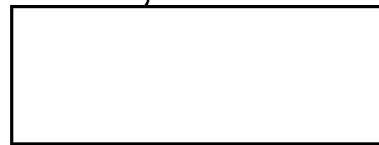
✓ c. The Maritime Administration is developing a new system to provide current locations of all U. S. merchant ships. This is a large and difficult task, but progress is being made. This is known as USMER Reporting.

d. NOSIC, in concert with several Government agencies concerned with U. S. merchant ships, is developing the Joint Maritime Information Element (JMIE) to provide locational data on U. S. ships on four-hour notice. This is for use in emergency evacuation actions and similar situations. The MARAD USMER system will contribute to this.

✓ e. The DMA Hydrographic Office is initiating several actions in an attempt to provide more reliable and effective Government communications to U. S. ships and shipping companies. Currently, fewer than 50 percent of U. S. ships copy or are capable of copying the Hydro broadcasts.

5. Captain Butts will provide a summary report of the meeting, monitor follow-up actions, and schedule another meeting in the near future. I will prepare a report on these actions for the Intelligence Operations Center conference at [] on 10 and 11 July.

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